

**Amendments to the Abstract:**

Please amend the Abstract as follows:

**ABSTRACT**

A method of preparing beta-spodumene bodies from a plastic batch comprised entirely of minerals, absent a glass component. The resulting structure has a stoichiometry of 1:1:4 ( $\text{Li}_2\text{O}-\text{Li}_2\text{O}_2\text{:Al}_2\text{O}_3\text{:SiO}_2$ ) to 1:1:11 ( $\text{Li}_2\text{O}-\text{Li}_2\text{O}_2\text{:Al}_2\text{O}_3\text{:SiO}_2$ ), and exhibits a low coefficient of thermal expansion, high porosity and high strength, and is suitable for automotive catalytic converter substrates requiring a fast light-off time. There is also provided a ceramic article having a solid-solution of beta-spodumene ranging in molar ratio from 1:1:4  $\text{Li}_2\text{O}-\text{Li}_2\text{O}_2\text{-Al}_2\text{O}_3\text{-SiO}_2$  to 1:1:11  $\text{Li}_2\text{O}_2\text{-Al}_2\text{O}_3\text{-SiO}_2$  wherein a component selected from the group consisting of magnesium oxide (MgO), manganese oxide (MnO), and cobalt oxide (CoO) is substituted for lithium oxide ( $\text{Li}_2\text{O}$ ) at 10 to 65 mole %, and optionally a minor phase of mullite ( $3\text{Al}_2\text{O}_3\text{-2SiO}_2$ ) in an amount of up to 50% by weight.